

"When it's All Over"

A play in one act.

Cast of Characters

Louise

Mary, her sister

John - a soldier of their country

Henry - a soldier of the enemy

Time - Anytime

Place - outside a village near
the border between two
warring nations.

Scene -

An open space at the side of a
wood leading through the wood. At
the back are trees and on both sides;
the road runs along the back. At the
lower left side is a large fallen tree
trunk used as a seat.

The incident takes place late in the afternoon but the sunshine is still bright until nearly the close. The gambler one heard booming in the distance at intervals.

When the curtain rises no one is to be seen but after a pause a soldier with rifle leveled creeps ~~out~~ out of the thicket on the left. He looks carefully about him, searches all the thicket, then peers up and down the road finally crossing it quickly and climbing up a tree that is at the side, back, ~~and~~ ~~glancing~~ overhanging the roadway.

After another pause from the right along the road ~~Miss Mary~~ and Louise come in ~~lightly~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~and~~ ~~up~~ look all about them quickly ~~and~~ ~~up~~ ~~the~~ ~~and~~ ~~up~~ down the road, ~~and~~ seeing no one

Louise can't contain her disappointment
but won't ~~write~~ ^{write} anything ^{about}
on Mary's shoulder.

Mary comforts her as they move to
log 28 left, where they sit.

Mary

This is not being as slow as John
expects you to be!

Louise

(Through her tears I know I mean to,
Bill I think Mary, John said that
they would be in Dillets three
days ago and that he could meet
me here then. We have come every-
day and waited and waited
and still, (So nice some more
~~and still, (So nice some more~~
~~and still, (So nice some more~~
Mary

Dear little sister, you must give
up hope so soon. I'm now ^{there} ~~and~~
so many delays, so many ^{and} ~~and~~

Do be patient! He may come before
the sunset to-day.

Louise

(Tearing away her tears) You're right, I
love Mary. Oh, I wish I
were calm and brave like you, and
didn't imagine there was an enemy
behind every bush. I wish I
knew where I should go to
see you?

Mary

(Drawing out revolver in silence)
We won't see or meet any of the
enemy until we see our own lines; but
if we should see them, I would fight
as pretty well.

Louise

(I inquired of Mary, I didn't know
you carried a revolver).

Mary

We must have something to protect us
when we come so far alone.

Louise

Then we are quite safe aren't we?
(frightened) Did you hear something

Mary

(calming her down) No, ~~not~~ dear, not a thing.

Louise

Yes I do, I hear ~~something~~ things
~~coming~~ and leaves rustling.

Mary

~~Maybe~~ Perhaps it's John, coming through
the bushes

Louise

(Delighted) Oh ~~maybe it is~~ if it
only were! I ~~must see if he's coming~~
~~I am afraid him~~ (as she runs to room)

(Just as she got there the same soldier
that climbed the tree jumps out of the
bushes)

Louise
(She cries with terror as she runs back to
Mary's side ~~the~~ enemy, the enemy!

(Mary rises quickly steps in front of
Louise and puts her hand to her
revolver, but stands staring at him
when she comes face to face with
him.)

Henry
(As he comes forward slowly I thought I
was not mistaken. O Louise! Don't
be afraid young woman. I would do
no harm to the sister of such an
esteemed friend; (how low to Mary)
in spite of the fact that we do not
come from the same side of the border.

(Smilingly) Does my ~~voice~~ ^{voice} make such a difference, do you know me yet Mary?

Mary
(Very astonished) ~~Henry~~ Henry! You here!
Henry
Yes, then you haven't quite forgotten me?

Mary
No, no of course not; and
(Thoughtfully) I have ~~often~~ ^{often} wondered if you too were fighting against us!

Henry
(Sorrowfully) My country needs me; would you have me neglect my duty?

Mary
No, not that ~~of course~~. But, oh, it seems so strange, so horrible that you should be one of the enemy.

~~Goodbye~~
~~Goodbye~~
~~Goodbye~~

Louise

(who has gotten up and drawn
exactly) Mary, I didn't know
you knew any of the men over
there, very well.

Mary

(thinks to Louise) Well yes, ^{Louise} I met
this - ~~you~~ this gentleman when I
recently crossed the border to visit
~~My dear, don't you see~~ a year
ago.

Henry

Yes, and I haven't seen you
since; But I haven't forgotten
(pleadingly)
you for a day - and now must
our meeting be as cold as this?
Because our countries are at
war ~~and we~~ we cannot be
friends?

Mary
~~she~~ starting to be more cordial
but holding herself back. You are my
country's enemy!

Henry
(pausatively) yes, but is it our
fault? (pause, coming closer) ~~Oh~~!
Just for a few minutes. Let's forget
the ~~past~~ and the ~~past~~ and all
the rest and take up our friendship
where we left off. Mary? Just
for a little while.

Mary looks at him smilingly and
holds out her hand no longer
him to sit beside her on the
bench. He only starts to get up

Louise

(Probably he was much distressed) Don't
forget he's one of the enemy. His bullet
may kill you!

Mary

(Almost bitterly) Or John's bullet
may kill him!

Mary turns to Henry who has ~~to~~
stopped and taken in the situation.
He now sits by Mary, ignoring

Louise, who turns away, ~~realized~~ the danger

"Good heavens! I just ~~thought~~ it,

you're in

~~in~~ Heaven's name behind our lines! What a

~~are~~ you doing here, absolutely
surrounded by our men.

Henry

(~~Passing it over with a laugh~~)
It's quite a risk, but ~~you see~~
nobody knows I'm here so they're

not looking for me. I ~~am~~ ~~take~~ a
big risk by ~~showing myself~~
to you, and still more of ~~one~~
by telling you that I'm doing
singing duty. But I trust to my
own ingenuity and swiftness to
get me out ^{of it} ~~all~~.

Mary & Louis

(shuddering) A singer!
(Louis draws away with horror and crouches
at back watching ~~away~~)

Yes, you have them two back of our
lines. It's pretty rotten business, I know,
the shooting a man in the back but
we all have to take our turn at it.

Louis

~~(Agonized) A singer! Suppose
John is doing that now, is surrounded
by enemies! (He shudders and X's
back to watch for him on the road
the ~~ridges~~ quite after and looks~~

~~looking at Henry~~

Mary

~~You are in great danger~~

I think you are in very great danger. I wish you wouldn't make so light of it. I -

Henry

(Interrupting her, feelingly) Do you really care? Tell me Mary, it will make no much difference.

Mary

(hesitates) For old-time's sake, I do, for the sake of the friendship we once held for one another.

Henry

(disappointed) No more than just that! ~~No more than you just would for any other friend. Doesn't it appear to you that I am in danger? Is something that's past the only thing that makes you care~~

whether I'm in danger? But she
turns away to come closer) Is it?

Mary
(looks down confusedly) Maybe not all
to - gether.

Henry
(pleased) ~~Then you do~~ quickly) Then you do
~~you do remember all~~
here one still? ~~forgetting~~
our goodtimes to gether? ~~after a time~~
~~and then~~ ~~you~~ Mary! won't you
say something? won't you give me
hope and encouragement to go on
write to go on and be brave and do
my duty?

Mary
(slowly) and to go on killing our
men! Shooting them in the back!
~~distressed~~ Oh no, I can't
let myself live now any more & my
country comes first. ~~what happens~~
turns away) ~~and~~ till after ~~it's~~ all
the trouble's over, at any rate.

Harry

(slowly)
~~you are right~~ Harry
~~this game of war~~
~~all have to play has gotten~~
~~pretty serious~~ we've
gotten dragged into it
might serious and there isn't
much time for friendship - or
love - or anything else. I'd just
have to stick to business, ~~and~~ ~~well~~, ~~have to~~
wait ~~until~~ it's all over. (He rises
and moves away a little way)

Harry

(Almost tragically) ~~It's~~ it's all over!
Oh, those words mean so
much to me; they give me the
strength to wait with patience,
till the time when these
dreadful common sense to doom, and
things are ~~bringing~~ to our village
all gashed and shot ~~down~~ to pieces.

Henry
After watching some to read your
letter seems ~~very~~ much
worried about something.

Many
Not ~~the~~ (probably not) really ~~the~~ just afraid ~~more~~
enemies will suffer ~~that~~ ~~that~~
you've old friends of mine, and
I'm very much surprised some of our
own men might happen along this
way, they ~~are~~ that ~~are~~ a good deal.

Henry
I know they do, that's why
I picked that ~~that~~ tree over there to hide
in.

Many
Warning herself But suppose, suppose
some one should come along
what would you do?

(firmly)

Henry

"What would they do!" ~~(it's off)~~

Mary

"Isn't it too big a risk for you! Really
hadn't you better go?"

Henry

(Passing it over lightly) Don't worry about
me little lady, I'm pretty used to
this business; after being at it for
~~six months~~ more than a year

Mary

"More than a year"
~~Six months~~! Will it never end?

Henry

(Indulgingly) I was enriched for a lot of
our share already. You men have seen
no that.

Mary

yes, and I'm so afraid that might
happen to you even before my very
eyes. Think of it! So won't you please

if you were ~~here~~ before me ~~and~~
~~eyes~~ ~~of~~ (almost surely) But
how can I? ~~I don't think~~ I ~~have~~
the strength to ~~the~~ ^{sacrifice} friendship to
the ~~cause~~ of patriotism! Oh if you will
only go away out of danger in my
sight, I will be able to bear it.

Henry

(Gently) you must not worry about me
I am in your country, I am in your
arms, I am in your hands, I am in your
But I could not through safe and sound.
And if I should remember it
would be all over for me and I
should be in your mind.
~~And I should be in your mind.~~

Mary

(Distressed) No, no, don't talk
that way. When ~~the~~ the struggle is
ended and it is quiet once again,
I shall be waiting here for you and
you must come through ~~at once~~ ^{at once} not to
keep me waiting long.

Henry
~~(Kisses her forehead)~~ I don't forget.
~~that's done I don't~~ ~~refers you waiting~~
~~long~~ But I must go now, it's
 getting late, almost sunset when all
~~the trouble begins so I must be on the~~
~~when it gets dark~~
 sun. ~~then~~ I can get back to our lines
 under cover of the night. (He looks
 carefully up and down road then ~~x~~ to trees)
 Mary

Back to the other side! Back to
 the lines that shoot his way!

Henry
~~Yes, so they go on as~~
~~until it's all over!~~
 everies

They smile at each other and she
 looks at him longingly as he ^{waving} disappears
 among bushes

Louise
 (Who has moved up L. She watches him
 off too, then with a sigh of relief
 she sinks on log and in a ~~long~~ ^{long}

voice - I thought ~~God~~ ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~gone~~! Oh Mary
I almost went ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~grave~~
~~have been in such agonies!~~ I thought
he would never go.

Mary

(Bringing herself back to earth, & to Louise)
My darling ~~little sister!~~ Of course
you were worried, I'm so sorry, But
you needed to be anxious ~~for~~ ~~your~~ ~~brother~~ ~~was~~ ~~gone~~ and
~~it all~~ ~~was~~ ~~over~~ ~~for~~ ~~him~~ ~~now~~ ~~he's~~ ~~gone~~ and
the coast is clear ~~for~~ ~~John~~.

Louise

Oh yes, and what a relief! ~~to~~ ~~the~~
previously! But Mary ~~how~~ ~~could~~ ~~you~~
~~tell~~ ~~so~~ ~~long~~ ~~since~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~
you seemed to know that ~~many~~ ~~years~~ ~~well~~
~~having~~ ~~known~~ ~~him~~ ~~before~~ ~~and~~ ~~to~~ ~~like~~ ~~him~~ ~~very~~ ~~much~~
~~how~~ ~~could~~ ~~you~~ ~~when~~ ~~he's~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~no~~ ~~enemy~~?

Mary

(Gladly shaking her head) I don't know dear,
I suppose I ~~could~~ ~~be~~ ~~helped~~ ~~(prayer)~~
Louise, would you also let me know
if he were on the other side?

(He speaks to) Mary. ^{Keep} Watch over there will
you; they ^{may be} all about us. For God's

~~sake don't make a noise.~~
(Exit Mary into bushes softly)
Louise.

(As they sit on log) John you look so
white, let me get you some water.

John.

No, no. I'll be all right ~~since~~
~~now~~; just get my breath, soon as
get ~~my~~ rested we must go on because
it's not very safe here now.

Louise

(Surprised) Not safe here! — Good heavens!
~~have they come here~~ they getting nearer?

John

(Reluctantly) Yes ~~John~~ have gained a few
yards, but ^(forcefully) won't let them do it
again, so don't worry.

Louise

Yes but where have you come from?

John

From the trenches, with important

dispatches; I ~~thought~~ I wouldn't have
been able to get here to ~~see you~~ ^{you}, we must
go on in a minute because I ~~have to~~ ^{have to} deliver
these before sun-down,

Louise

Oh John I'm so glad to see you, so
thankful you're alive!

John

You angel! I was just the thought of
you that made me keep up, that
made me run like hell when that
sniper started after me, ~~it was~~

Louise

(Sniper, looks about) O sniper!

John

Yes, he lost sight of me when I dodged
him around some bushes.

Louise

What's the matter with
you? Cut the wire & the snipers!

John

The ~~scoundrels~~ ~~are~~ ~~are~~ are so
scattered about that they can take all
our messages. (He tries to drag himself

to stand up. This is the only way, if I can
ever get to head quarters. (7 logs down on
log beside Louis & Giovanni) ~~nothing more to get.~~

Louis

Want ~~just a minute~~ ^{some} a little longer,
you can go faster than.
-John.

John

Yes,
And it is ~~not~~ late. The sun ~~isn't~~
~~isn't~~ setting yet is it?

Levin

No, not ^{house} it's still quite bright,

John

(Sighing with head on Louise's shoulder) What
a time I did have getting out of our
trouble!

Louis

What happened?

John

They almost got me when I was
wriggling and squirming over the open
space back of our lines.

Louise

How beautiful!

John

(Smiling) I was exciting! If I hadn't
flattered out so quickly then bunch of
bullets would have been my finish.

Louise

Oh John, don't tell me any more, I can't
stand it!

John

There, there! (Sits up straight) Guess
I can't ~~get~~ ~~along~~ going along now. You
and Mary are safer alone! Go back
to the village as quickly as possible but
don't alarm them there because we
aren't going to let those beasts get
another inch. I swear it! (Grabbing
in her eyes) They should come near
my ~~eye~~ ^{Louise}! If it takes my last breath to
keep them away!

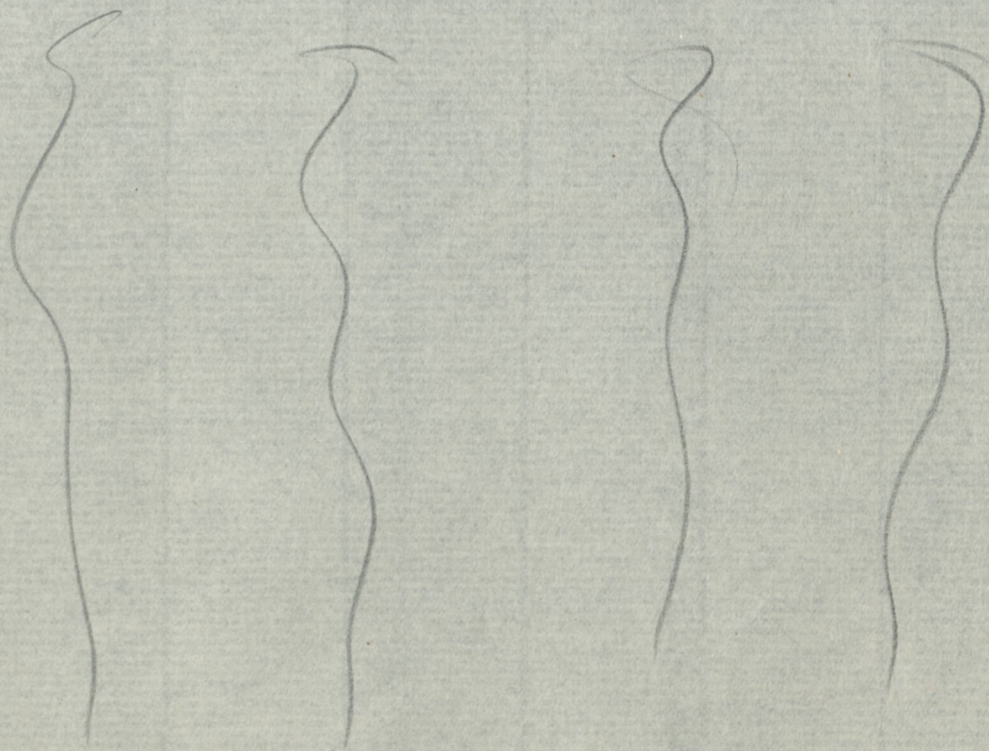
Louise

Oh, I love you so!

(He takes her in his arms for a second
then they both start to rise when
Louise looking over John's shoulder
sees Henry crouching in the bushes
back of him.)

Louise.

(So terrified she can hardly speak)
John! Back of you. (Screams out)
Help! Some one, help!



she stands with her side to the
audience.

Harry

I guess the women will have to
stand it; ~~if you don't know it~~
because you remind me that I had
better shoot ~~it~~ immediately.

Louise

(Quickly ~~throws~~ herself in front of
John and half kneeling pleads with H.)
~~Oh you wouldn't really shoot him~~
~~would you? Please, please don't~~
~~do any more in the world~~
~~for you, please don't!~~
~~John's life~~ You shall not!

John protests with her and tries to drag
her away.

Harry

(Not turning the head but addressing Mary)
Mary, you had ~~not~~ tell your
sister to get out of the way, I mean
business.

John drags her away

Louise

~~My dear~~ Love
(with her arm out) But you ~~like~~ my
sister, & she won't let you for her
sake spare the man I love. Please,
~~for her sake,~~

~~(John drags her away)~~
~~he gets her~~ in front of her
Henry

Relentlessly This is war; that's Louise's
game, ~~we're going~~. Our end has to
be gained at any cost. So if you
don't get out of the way I'll shoot
right through you to him.

Louise

~~(Louise drags herself back)~~
~~Still trying to change John's~~

trying his best to move her

Oh Mary, we ~~love~~ ~~do~~ you, you
can't you persuade him, ~~to~~
~~won't you help me~~ you help me
~~won't you help me~~ won't you help me
won't you speak a word?

(Mary doesn't move, Louise is desperate)

Henry

(He'll be himself again to aiming rifle)
For the time I say - three if you're
not out of the way, young ~~man~~,
you'll have to take the consequences

(at this John with all his might
~~he~~ ~~he~~ ~~he~~ Louise said while
Henry says -)

One - two -

(but before he says three a shot
is fired, ~~Henry~~ ~~Henry~~ ~~Henry~~ a minute
and then falls to the ground)

(John and Louise both look
around astonished but Mary slowly
turns with a wild dazed look in
her eyes as she looks at the pistol
then at Henry, passing her hand
over her forehead, in the meantime -

